

FIVE YEAR PLAN



*Florida Commission for the
Transportation Disadvantaged*

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FIVE YEAR TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED PLAN

Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged

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Background

Chapter 427 of the Florida Statutes establishes the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged and directs the Commission to “accomplish the coordination of transportation services provided to the transportation disadvantaged”.

The Commission consists of 27 members, representing both the public and private sectors; a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson are elected annually from the membership.

Commission members, as of May 2005, are listed below.

Peter Gianino, Chair
Tony Tizzio, Vice Chair
James Barr
Gary Bryant
Ed Coven
Pam Dorwarth
Michael Georgini
Richard Gunnels
Dr. J.R. Harding
Albert Linden
Tiffany Lynn
Dr. William Moon

Marybeth Nayfield
Anthony Nigro
Walter Schoenig
Robert “Rob” Searcy
Robert Siedlecki
Cheryl Stone
Jim Swisher
Wei Ueberschaer
Floyd Webb
Joyce Williams
Bhailal Vyas

Chapter 427 further mandates the Commission “prepare a 5-year transportation disadvantaged plan which addresses the transportation problems of the transportation disadvantaged, is fully coordinated with local transit plans, is compatible with local government comprehensive plans, and which ensures that the most cost-effective and efficient method of providing transportation to the disadvantaged is programmed for development.”

The Commission’s most recent long range plan was adopted in 1997 and continues to provide guidance to the Commission. This document builds on the direction established in the 1997 plan, satisfies the Commission’s statutory requirement for plan development, and will help guide the Commission’s decision-making throughout the decade.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2005 State of Florida Transportation Disadvantaged Plan provides a framework for the growth of Florida's Transportation Disadvantaged program. The plan has been developed in cooperation with the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) and is designed to help the CTD fulfill its mission and achieve its vision.

Section 1, Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles, discusses the mission and vision for the CTD.

The Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged has a clear picture of Florida's transportation future. This desired future is not described in a simple phrase but is comprised of the following vision themes.

- Sound financial system
- Adequate quality services
- Accessible physical infrastructure
- Coordination, cooperation, and inclusion
- Education/marketing

The Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged also has a clear picture of why it exists:

To ensure the availability of efficient, cost-effective and quality transportation services for transportation disadvantaged persons.

Section 2, Impacting Elements, provides a summary of the issues impacting the Commission and transportation disadvantaged services.

Section 3, 1997 Plan Implementation, summarizes progress towards implementing actions identified in the Commission's 1997 plan.

Section 4, Goals, provides a summary of the Goals and Strategic Objectives.

Goal 1—Develop a permanent stream of state funding that leverages local and federal dollars and is sufficient to meet current and future TD needs.

Goal 2—Develop and adopt uniform and comprehensive standards for the equitable and accountable distribution of funds.

Goal 3—Develop and adopt uniform and comprehensive standards for the equitable and accountable use of funds.

Goal 4—Reduce the cost, where possible and appropriate, of TD services.

Goal 5—Quality of TD services will be measured by the expectation that a qualified individual will be picked up in a reasonably reliable, timely, safe and professional manner as appropriate given the locale.

Goal 6—The CTD will continue to seek funding and support collaborations to meet all trip requests within the law.

Goal 7—Community design will facilitate access to all modes for all citizens.

Goal 8—Maintain and preserve an efficient and effective transportation infrastructure that is accessible to all eligible transportation disadvantaged citizens while meeting the needs of the community.

Goal 9—Establish a statewide transportation disadvantaged system that functions seamlessly by coordinating service and operations across local government lines and that is flexible enough to accommodate and link special riders with providers.

Goal 10—Maintain an educated public regarding the value of a coordinated TD system for the community and the rights and responsibilities of TD riders and providers.

Goal 11—Require TD as a component of local comprehensive planning.

Section 5, Multi-Year Implementation Schedule, details specific actions that the Commission should implement in order to achieve its desired goals.

Appendices 1-7 summarize the outcomes of the qualitative and quantitative research efforts that formed the basis for the Five Year Plan.

SECTION 1

VISION, MISSION, AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

CTD VISION

A vision statement should *clearly* and *succinctly* reflect a long-term focus on what you want to make happen, a definition of where you want to go, and your dream. A vision statement should inspire people to act.

The Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged has a clear picture of Florida's transportation future. This desired future is described by the following vision themes which the Commission approved in May, 2004.

- Sound financial system
- Adequate quality services
- Accessible physical infrastructure
- Coordination, cooperation, and inclusion
- Education/marketing

CTD MISSION

A mission statement should *clearly* and *succinctly* identify what you do, your purpose, and who you serve.

In May, 2004 the Commission reaffirmed its mission: *To ensure the availability of efficient, cost-effective and quality transportation services for transportation disadvantaged persons.*

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In November, 2002 the Commission identified the following as principles that will guide all its efforts.

- Remember the customer/rider's needs first
- The Commission should work together in a collaborative and creative manner
- Promote the value and quality of service while looking for opportunities

SECTION 2 IMPACTING ELEMENTS

In November of 2002, the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged conducted a Strategic Visioning Workshop. According to the Commission Chair, the purpose of this session "was to build some consensus among members on a shared long-term vision of success for the Commission and service for the transportation disadvantaged community."

During the course of this visioning session the Commission identified:

- Forces aiding the Commission's ability to meet its mission (tailwinds);
- Forces hindering the Commission's ability to meet its mission (headwinds);
- Trends affecting the Commission's work and transportation services for the transportation disadvantaged; and
- The most important issues/tasks the Commission needs to address.

TAILWINDS

The following factors were identified as forces that aid the Commission in accomplishing its mission:

- The disadvantaged community
- Committed commissioners
- Dedicated staff
- Diversity of Commission
- Experience of Commission
- The Commission's independence, funding, and legislative origin

HEADWINDS

The following factors were identified as forces that hinder the Commission in accomplishing its mission:

- Limited funding
- Increasing costs
- Growing target population
- Lack of standardization and agency coordination
- The need to work together to improve understanding of the Commission's work
- Hidden agendas

TRENDS IMPACTING CTD'S EFFORTS

The following issues were identified as trends that are beyond the Commission's control but which impact the Commission's efforts:

- Rising or decreasing funding levels will impact the Commission's ability to address rising costs and demand for service.
- Increasing population and related need for transportation services for transportation disadvantaged persons.
- Agencies are looking outside the coordinated system for transportation services.
- Increasing diversity of transportation providers.
- Increasing communication tools and possible new system for use by TD
- Growing demand and declining resources
- New delivery technologies for services and communications may decrease the demand and need for trips.
- The economic impact of not getting people to work; not adequately capturing this cost to society.

IMMEDIATE ISSUES

The following issues were identified by the Commission as requiring more immediate attention:

- Funding issues
- Operational costs; particularly insurance
- Software
- Improve understanding among stakeholders of the Commission's role and responsibilities and address stakeholder expectations
- Work with the legislature
- Address delivery options
- Clarify processes
- Consider purchasing pools for economies of scale
- Improve CTC performance
- CTC performance monitoring
- Make TD users more aware of the Commission, its responsibilities, and the services provided
- TD users should know their rights and responsibilities
- TD users should be informed when and where to register concerns beyond the local CTC customer service base
- There should be diligent and timely response to problems before they create legislative intervention

SECTION 3 1997 PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The most recent 5 Year Transportation Disadvantaged Plan was approved by the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged in 1997. In order to determine specific actions for the future, it is appropriate to determine what the CTD has accomplished since completion of the 1997 plan. Following is a summary of the CTD's major accomplishments since 1997.

APTA/ITS

Approved Action: Secure a grant from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to fund a demonstration project integrating Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) and other Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) applications.

Outcome: The Commission received a \$400,000 grant from the Federal Transit Administration which was matched by state and local resources of \$345,000. This \$745,000 project involved the acquisition and installation of computer hardware, route scheduling and dispatching software, and requisite training for 6 rural Community Transportation Coordinators. The project produced improved staff efficiencies, improved accuracy of information, and cost reductions.

Approved Action: Use the results from the Automatic Vehicle Location demonstration project to develop and implement a statewide coordination strategy for implementing ITS/APTS applications.

Outcome: No reportable progress.

Within 5 years the Commission anticipates that service providers will be included as part of an APTS data base with information regarding service available electronically through computer access, information kiosks, and other means.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Approved Action: Implement new TD eligibility criteria.

Outcome: New eligibility criteria were developed and adopted. Community Transportation Coordinators have implemented processes to ensure the criteria are being appropriately utilized. All CTCs have developed an eligibility application form.

Approved Action: Refine electronic information management system used to collect and analyze passenger and trip data. This information can

be used to evaluate eligibility and travel characteristics of the population served.

Outcome: The Commission is proceeding with an electronic information management system. This process is being somewhat inhibited by barriers to information access (i.e. firewalls) that make data access problematic.

Approved Action: Review TD eligibility determination processes used by CTCs to ensure adherence to statewide policy.

Outcome: Results from the CTD's annual Quality Assurance process suggests that CTCs are complying.

Approved Action: Complete implementation of an electronic information management system for collecting and tracking passenger and trip data.

Outcome: The implementation of electronic reporting has provided the Commission with more accurate and timely data which facilitates the Commission's review and analysis role.

STATEWIDE FUND PROGRAM

Approved Action: Use data from the Annual Expenditure Reports to identify and track the use of transportation funds for coordinated and non-coordinated service.

Outcome: CTD staff utilizes data from the Annual Expenditure Reports and the Annual Budget Estimates to evaluate the level of state agency participation in the coordinated program.

Approved Action: Identify policies and programs that create barriers and limit TD program coordination. Identify costs associated with these barriers and limitations.

Outcome: No reportable progress.

Approved Action: After identifying barriers and limitations to coordinated/consolidated funding at the state level, develop a strategy for integrating statewide coordination of community transportation funding.

Outcome: No reportable progress.

MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

Approved Action: Continue to develop and implement bus pass and ticket programs with fixed-route service providers.

Outcome: Significant progress is being made on this item as evidenced by data included in the Annual Operating Report.

Approved Action: Continue to develop and implement fixed-route and flexible routing approaches for rural areas.

Outcome: Significant progress is being made on this issue as evidenced by information included in TDSPs.

Approved Action: Develop and implement a strategy to optimize the mix of transportation services provided locally to include volunteer programs, paratransit, private transportation service, school buses, and fixed route services, as appropriate.

Outcome: No reportable progress.

Approved Action: Use Geographic Information Systems (GIS) applications to evaluate service delivery options for providing integrated services.

Outcome: Examples of GIS utilization are provided by MPOs and the CTD.

Approved Action: Continue to investigate the efficacy of route deviation and other flexible routing structures to improve productivity and be responsive to passenger travel needs.

Outcome: Numerous CTCs are utilizing flexible routing structures as a means of more cost-effectively satisfying customer travel needs.

Approved Action: Continue involvement with FDOT's Maintenance Training Program and Vehicle Procurement Program to ensure continuity between FDOT and CTD policies and procedures to optimize the transportation delivery system.

Outcome: CTC's actively participate in the vehicle procurement program. CTD staff participation in the Maintenance Training Program is limited.

COST EFFECTIVENESS & ACCOUNTABILITY

Approved Action: Continue to identify ways to maintain or reduce the cost of TD services and maximize trip dollars.

Outcome: TD Commissioners regularly and actively address cost reduction issues.

Approved Action: Continue to improve accountability for all TD expenditures.

Outcome: Implementation of the APTS/ITS project has facilitated the electronic submission of Annual Operating Reports, which has further improved financial accountability of CTC's.

SECTION 4 GOALS

Goals help provide direction and begin the process of identifying what needs to be done to help the CTD fulfill its mission and accomplish its vision.

In May, 2004 the Commission approved the following goals. The goals are structured around the five thematic elements of the Commission's vision and form the basis for the multi-year implementation plan outlined in Section 5.

THEME: SOUND FINANCIAL SYSTEM

Goals

- Develop a permanent stream of state funding that leverages local and federal dollars and is sufficient to meet current and future TD needs.
- Develop and adopt uniform and comprehensive standards for the equitable and accountable distribution of funds.
- Develop and adopt uniform and comprehensive standards for the equitable and accountable use of funds.
- Reduce costs, where possible and appropriate.

Vision Theme Metrics

The Commission will be able to measure progress towards vision attainment by evaluating annual changes in the following performance measures.

- Cost per trip
- CTD cost as a percentage of total trip cost
- Federal funding for TD
- State funding for TD

THEME: ADEQUATE QUALITY SERVICES

Goals

- The quality of TD services will be measured by the expectation that a qualified individual will be picked up in a reasonably reliable, timely, safe and professional manner, as appropriate, given the locale.
- The CTD will continue to seek funding and support collaborations to meet all trip requests within the law.

Vision Theme Metrics

The Commission will be able to measure progress towards vision attainment by evaluating annual changes in the following performance measures.

- Number of trips provided
- Number of passengers/customers served
- Number of passenger complaints

THEME: ACCESSIBLE PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Goals

- Community design will facilitate access to all modes for all citizens.
- Maintain and preserve an efficient and effective transportation infrastructure that is accessible to all eligible transportation disadvantaged citizens while meeting the needs of the community.

Vision Theme Metrics

The Commission will be able to measure progress towards vision attainment by conducting annual surveys and evaluating changes in the survey responses.

THEME: COORDINATION, COOPERATION, AND INCLUSION

Goal

- Establish a statewide a transportation disadvantaged system that functions seamlessly by coordinating service and operations across local government lines and that is flexible enough to accommodate and link special riders with providers.

Vision Theme Metrics

The Commission will be able to measure progress towards vision attainment by evaluating annual changes in the following performance measures.

- Cost per trip
- Number of passengers/customers served
- Trips per passenger

THEME: EDUCATION/MARKETING

Goals

- Maintain an educated public regarding the value of a coordinated TD system for the community and the rights and responsibilities of TD riders and providers.
- Require TD as a component of local comprehensive planning.

Vision Theme Metrics

The Commission will be able to measure progress towards vision attainment by evaluating annual changes in the following performance measures.

- Survey results
- Website utilization

SECTION 5 MULTI-YEAR IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

The ultimate success of any planning process is measured by what is accomplished. The following CTD multi-year implementation plan identifies actions the Commission can implement, identifies parties responsible for implementing each action, and establishes deadline for completion.

2005

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TARGET DATE
Develop annual legislative agenda to secure additional state funding for TD	Executive Director Executive Committee	October 1
Pursue alternative resources in addition to dedicated funding	Executive Director Assistant Director for Finance and Administration	December 1
Review and implement insurance cost containment measures	Assistant Director for Program Administration	July 1
Quantify 1 year and 5 year budget needs for all CTCs; compile statewide total	Assistant Director for Program Administration CTD Staff	July 1
Prepare summary of possible state level funding sources	Assistant Director for Program Administration	July 1
Collaborate with FDOT and FPTA to secure additional federal funding for TD	Executive Director Assistant Director for Finance and Administration	December 1
Develop standards whenever possible based on acceptable industry standards for fully determining costs	Assistant Director for Finance and Administration Assistant Director for Program Administration	October 1
Identify and implement operator efficiency measures	Transportation Disadvantaged Specialist	July 1
Identify the major cost components of TD service	Transportation Disadvantaged Specialist Project Administration Manager	May 1
Identify cost containment measures used nationally	Transportation Disadvantaged Specialist	May 1
Establish performance measures that are applied to all CTCs	Quality Assurance Manager	September 1
Implement proactive customer survey process to evaluate service quality	Quality Assurance Manager	September 1
Optimize resources by matching needs with resources	Transportation Disadvantaged Specialist Project Administration Manager	December 1
Establish a user database	Information Technologies Specialist	July 1

Collaborate with the Florida DOT to ensure that CTC's which receive FTA funding are providing service to the general public	Executive Director Quality Assurance Manager	December 1
Develop and implement an effective outreach/media plan tailored to educate target audiences: general public, media, elected officials, funding sources, providers, and riders	Public Relations Manager	August 1
Ensure riders know his/her rights and responsibilities	Public Relations Manager Quality Assurance Manager	December 1
Establish statewide phone number for information on available TD service	Public Relations Manager	April 1
Conduct statewide survey of TD customers to assess awareness of rights and responsibilities	Public Relations Manager Quality Assurance Manager	October 1
Enhance and promote the CTD website	Public Relations Manager Information Technology Specialist	May 1
Incorporate an education/marketing track in the annual TD conference	Project Administration Manager Public Relations Manager	July 1
Explore contractual relationships with the Florida Association of Coordinated Transportation Systems and other associations	Project Administration Manager Public Relations Manager	April 1
Develop a statewide, standardized system for allocating costs and provide consistent measurement	Assistant Director for Finance and Administration	May 1

2006-2007

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TARGET DATE
Persuade the legislature of the costs of not meeting the needs of the transportation disadvantaged and seek to add money and reduce exemptions to the TD trust fund	Executive Director Public Relations Manager Executive Committee	2006
Document and quantify the costs of not meeting the needs of transportation disadvantaged persons	Executive Director	2006
Serve as the funding clearinghouse and bank for the multiple agencies and their funds dedicated to TD	Executive Director Assistant Director for Finance and Administration	2007
Pursue state legislation which requires all state agencies to utilize the CTD as a funding clearinghouse	Executive Director Executive Committee	2007
Review and create a more consistent agency rate structure	Executive Director The Commission	2006
Empower LCBs to assess appropriateness of rate structure	The Commission	2007
Implement technical assistance program that helps local CTCs to identify and implement cost savings measures	Executive Director Assistant Director for Finance and Administration Assistant Director for Program Administration	2006
Identify and implement measures to reduce the annual cost of the CTD	Executive Director The Commission	2006
Conduct a TD Community Design conference	Executive Director Public Relations Manager Transportation Disadvantaged Specialist	2007
Conduct annual survey of transportation disadvantaged persons	Public Relations Manager	2006
Implement a state level campaign to promote the benefits of transit coordination.	Public Relations Manager	2006
Establish financial incentives to promote coordination	Executive Director The Commission	2006
Implement a pilot program to measure/demonstrate the benefits of coordinating service with school districts	Executive Director Project Administration Manager	2007
Evaluate responses from ombudsman hotline to identify systemic issues/opportunities for improvement	Quality Assurance Manager	2006

Conduct statewide survey to assess level of citizen awareness of TD program/services	Public Relations Manager	2006
Evaluate current comprehensive planning mandates to determine how TD elements are incorporated	Transportation Disadvantaged Specialist	2007
Develop desired TD planning mandates	Transportation Disadvantaged Specialist	2007
Establish minimum TD planning standards for Long Range Transportation Plans	Transportation Disadvantaged Specialist The Commission	2007

2008-2009

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TARGET DATE
Adopt and adapt technology to enhance TD system efficiency and coordination.	Executive Director	2008
Establish strategic partnerships with Florida Chapter of the American Association of Architects (AIA) and the Florida Chapter of the American Planning Association (FAPA)	Executive Director	2009
Conduct annual survey of local government planning professionals	Public Relations Manager	2008
Promote legislation that awards grants and/or incentives for promoting accessible communities	Executive Director The Commission	2009
Coordinate laws and regulations into a uniform code	Executive Director The Commission	2009
Promote the CTD as a resource to other state funded agencies	Executive Director Public Relations Manager	2008
Incorporate TD presentations at Florida League of Cities, Florida Association of Counties, and Florida Public Transit Association venues	Executive Director Public Relations Manager	2008

PERFORMANCE METRICS

The development of a plan is the starting point for improving the Transportation Disadvantaged program. Real change and improvement will occur only if the plan is implemented and if the Commission takes steps to measure the impacts of its actions.

The following list of performance measures will help the Commission determine the effectiveness of the plan.

- Average cost per one-way trip
- Percentage of one-way trip costs paid with TD funds
- Total amount of federal funding for TD services
- Total amount of state funding for TD services
- Total number of one-way trips provided
- Number of passengers/customers served
- Number of passenger complaints
- Total one-way trips per passenger/customer

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged is encouraged to realign its committee structure. The suggested realignment would improve operational efficiency of the Commission, improve its ability to focus on the desired future, and ensure implementation of the plan.

Each committee would be responsible to:

- Meet quarterly
- Appoint a chair and vice-chair
- Maintain record of meetings
- Assess quantifiable progress towards goal accomplishment
- Report quarterly to the full commission

Following are the suggested committees and some specific areas of responsibility for each committee.

SOUND FINANCIAL SYSTEM COMMITTEE

(Accounting, Profit & Loss Responsibility, Finance, Budgeting, Performance Measures)

- Evaluate and recommend annual Commission budget
- Evaluate and recommend proposed consultant expenditures and special grant program expenditures
- Review and recommend policies and procedures
- Review and approve Annual Performance Report
- Monitor funds collected and expended in the TD Trust Fund
- Review other financial and program related matters, as needed
- Review and approve rate increases exceeding 3% and justified by CTCs based on Commission-approved rate review criteria
- Provide a written report to the Commission on actions taken or forward rate increase requests when agreement cannot be found by the committee
- Receive and review rate increases below 3% as delegated to the Executive Director
- Seek to increase the amount of state funding for TD services
- Develop and adopt standards for TD fund distribution
- Develop and adopt standards for use of TD funds
- Identify and recommend cost reduction measures
- Submit quarterly report to Executive Committee

QUALITY SERVICE COMMITTEE

(Customer Service, Business Development, Transit/Paratransit Operations, Sales, Public Relations, Media Relations, Law, Public Policy Development, Labor Relations)

- Evaluate and make recommendations to the full Commission concerning transportation issues.
- Ensure that all publicly-funded transportation services to transportation disadvantaged persons are coordinated within the statewide TD system.
- Identify and recommend opportunities for service sharing among transportation disadvantaged service providers.
- Develop criteria, review and select annual Rural Capital Equipment Assistance Grant awards and recommend to the full Commission.
- Evaluate, improve and provide oversight to the implementation and expansion of the Ombudsman Program.
- Serve as oversight committee to review and report progress to the full Commission for services coordinated and provided by CTCs and subcontractors.
- Develop criteria, review and select annual award winners for annual conference.
- Implement outreach activities to inform Florida residents of the benefits of the TD system.
- Ensure that all TD users are aware of their rights.
- Ensure that all TD providers are aware of their responsibilities.
- Establish TD service quality measures.
- Submit quarterly report to Executive Committee.

ACCESSIBLE INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

(Urban Planning & Zoning, Real Estate Sales and Development, Architecture and Urban Design)

- Promote transit accessibility for all new construction
- Maintain and preserve transportation infrastructure that is accessible to transportation disadvantaged persons
- Ensure that TD is a part of all local comprehensive planning efforts
- Submit quarterly report to Executive Committee

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

(Chair, Vice-Chair, Subcommittee Chairs)

- Conduct annual performance of Executive Director and report to the Commission.
- Conduct process for hiring or termination of the Executive Director with recommendation to the full Commission.

- Advise Executive Director on personnel matters, when requested by the Executive Director.
- Annually seek letters of interest from Commissioners wishing to serve as Chair and Vice Chair and prepare a proposed slate for review and action by the full Commission.
- Advise the Executive Director on program matters and make recommendations for action.
- Provide quarterly update to Commission regarding plan implementation.

CONCLUSION

Incorporating planning and implementation principals with widespread Commission involvement focused on concrete goals and action steps is critical to the level of success Florida's Transportation Disadvantaged Program can achieve.

The recommendations identified in this plan need to proceed to next steps. These steps include organization, creation of action plans, milestones and activity timelines, and review of resources—internal or contracted—necessary for implementation.

With this plan, a statutory mandate has been satisfied and a significant step has been taken to improving transportation services for Florida's transportation disadvantaged residents.

APPENDICES 1-7